



For Immediate Release

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***RESPITE CARE BILL TO AID FAMILIES SUPPORTING ELDERLY,  
DISABLED, APPROVED BY SENATE, ENZI SAYS***

**Washington, D.C.** - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), said today the full Senate has approved a bill to provide aid to caregivers providing care and support to an elderly or disabled relative.

The bill, H.R. 3248, the "Lifespan Respite Care Act," was approved by the House on Monday, and will now be signed into law by the President.

"Over 40 million caregivers in the United States are providing informal care and support to an elderly relative or one with a disability," Enzi said Friday. "That represents about one out of every five homes in the country. The relief this bill will provide is badly needed and long overdue for too many families."

The Lifespan Respite Care Act will help these caregivers by authorizing competitive grants to Aging and Disability Resource Centers in collaboration with state-based respite coalitions and organizations to make quality respite care available and accessible to families that need it, regardless of age or disability.

Respite care provides family caregivers with the time to maintain their own health, bolster family stability, and keep marriages intact. It also allows family caregivers to avoid or delay nursing home or foster care placements.

"I would like to thank my good colleague Senator John W. Warner (R-VA) for his leadership and work on this important piece of legislation," Enzi said. "It was his bill that we moved through the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Without his perseverance, we would not be here today to pass this bill and send it to the President for his signature. I also would like to thank Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY), the cosponsor of this important bill."

Over 180 national and state organizations have endorsed this important legislation, including the Alzheimer's Association; the MS Society; Easter Seals;

Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation; the ALS Association and the National Patient Advocate Foundation.

In the Senate, a similar version of the passed unanimously in 2003 and has twice passed the HELP Committee in previous Congresses. The legislation has strong bipartisan support in the Senate.

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